

GFM

## United States District Court

SOUTHERN

DISTRICT OF

ALABAMA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

CHELSIE DANIELLE FRENCH

CASE NUMBER: MS 11-0146-C

I, the undersigned complainant being duly sworn state the following is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief: on or about between January 31, 2009 and the date of this Complaint, in Mobile county, in the Southern District of Alabama, and elsewhere, defendant did

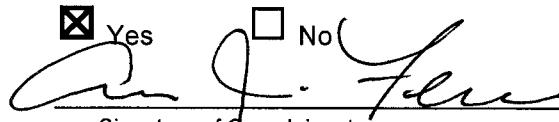
Conspire to distribute and to possess with intent to distribute methamphetamine,

in violation of Title 21 United States Code, Sections 846 and 841(a)(1).

I further state that I am a Senior Special Agent of Homeland Security Investigations and that this complaint is based on the following facts:

See Attached Affidavit hereby incorporated by reference as if fully restated herein.

Continued on the attached sheet and made a part hereof:

☒ Yes☐ No


Signature of Complainant

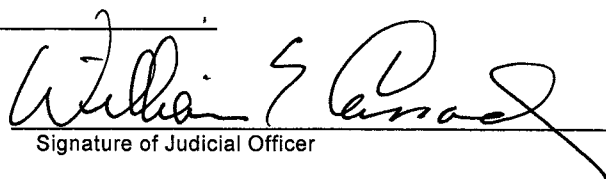
Angelo J. Fermo

Homeland Security Investigations

Sworn to before me and subscribed in my presence,

June 21, 2011 at Mobile, Alabama  
Date City and State

William E. Cassady  
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE  
Name & Title of Judicial Officer



Signature of Judicial Officer

Angelo J. Fermo, a Senior Special Agent of the United States Department of Homeland Security's / Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), being duly sworn, states as follows:

1. Your affiant believes that probable cause exists that Chelsie Danielle **FRENCH** has violated the following federal laws:

21 USC 841 (Possession of a Controlled Substance with Intent to Distribute)  
21 USC 846 (Attempt and Conspiracy)

2. I am currently Senior Special Agent with the United States Department of Homeland Security, / Homeland Security Investigations (HSI). I have been a Special Agent for approximately (9) nine years and (5) five months. I have a Bachelors degree in Criminal Justice and a Masters degree in Education.
3. As a Special Agent for Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), my duties regularly include investigations involving money laundering, narcotics smuggling, and criminal immigration violations. I have been assigned for approximately four (4) years to HSI'S undercover operations. Prior to this assignment, I was assigned five (5) years to the South Texas High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) task force. My investigations have led to the arrest and successful prosecution of multiple drug trafficking organizations, I have been the affiant on multiple court authorized Title III wire interceptions and I have been the lead agent on multiple Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) operations.
4. As will be documented in succeeding paragraphs, your affiant has learned that Chelsie Danielle **FRENCH** and others operate a large-scale, international, drug smuggling operation. Based on investigative findings, this organization has been distributing a pure quality form of methamphetamine known as "ICE." The following paragraphs will detail **FRENCH'S** role in the organization, **FRENCH'S** distribution activities related to the sale and distribution of narcotics. The following report is a combination of investigative activities of myself and other law enforcement officers.

#### **DETAILS OF INVESTIGATION:**

5. On or about January 31, 2009 a search warrant was executed at 11160 Trace Lane Wilmer, Alabama. Sleeping in the living room, of the mobile home, were the legal occupants of the residence to include Jeffrey Lane EBARB, Elisha Brianne STRINGFELLOW, and Chelsie Danielle **FRENCH**. Items that were located, on the coffee table, in the living room, included a baggie corner containing approximately three (3) grams of ICE, rolling papers, marijuana, two glass meth pipes, and several baggies with suspected meth residue. Also located inside of the residence was a 12 gauge shotgun and additional drug paraphernalia.
6. On or about May 29, 2009, a traffic stop was initiated on a gray 2001 BMW, known to be driven by Chelsie Danielle **FRENCH**. Also present, in the vehicle, was Elisha Brianne

STRINGFELLOW, and Michael HOWELL. Deputies observed a white male, later identified as John Wayne MILLS, as he passed items to FRENCH and FRENCH then passed items back to MILLS. As Deputies approached the BMW, **FRENCH** attempted to leave the parking lot at a high rate of speed.

7. A terry pat was conducted on MILLS and permission was given for Deputies to enter his pockets. Two small baggies containing suspected methamphetamines were removed from MILLS' pants pocket. A canine was utilized on the BMW with a positive alert indicated on the driver's side door.
8. A search of the BMW revealed four (4) blister packs of pseudoephedrine pills, a ball of white material that field tested positive for methamphetamines, one-hundred (100) loose pseudoephedrine pills for a total of 140 pseudoephedrine pills, three containers of Drano, and a roll of plastic tubing. An estimated total of five (5) grams of methamphetamines was confiscated from the vehicle and from the person of John Wayne Mills.
9. On or about July 15, 2009 a traffic stop was initiated on a 2004 blue Chevrolet Silverado pick-up that was registered to Jeremy Travis JORDAN. A call of a stolen dog was made with the blue truck as the suspect vehicle and two females as the suspects in the theft of the dog. The vehicle was located and a traffic stop was initiated. A white female, identified as Chelsie Danielle **FRENCH**, was driving the vehicle and subsequently granted verbal permission for the vehicle to be searched. Located in the driver's side map pocket was a clear baggie corner with a white powder residue believed to be methamphetamines and two bonding company receipts for Daniel Oneal NEWBURN. A Department of Forensic Sciences analyses confirmed the residue to be methamphetamines.
10. On or about February 05, 2010 a search warrant was executed at 9041 A Old Mobile Road Spanish Fort, Alabama. ABC Agents and Sheriff's Deputies had responded to the residence attempting to locate and pick up Daniel Oneal NEWBURN on an outstanding felony warrant. The residence was found to be occupied by Daniel Oneal NEWBURN, Chelsie Danielle **FRENCH**, Delia Leigh COOK, and Michael Lowe PALMER. Located in the bedroom where **FRENCH** and NEWBURN were located was methamphetamines, a mirror with methamphetamines, and a glass pipe used to smoke methamphetamines. Additional drugs were located in the master bedroom area occupied by COOK and PALMER.
11. On or about April 30, 2010, a cooperating witness placed a call to Roy Noyal REED JR., to trade pseudoephedrine pills to Reed in exchange for methamphetamines. Surveillance was set up around the location where the exchange was to take place. Prior to the arrival of Reed, a black 2009 Honda Accord was observed pulling into the parking lot. The vehicle was identified as being driven by Chelsie Danielle **FRENCH**. **FRENCH** parked her vehicle, remained for a few minutes before leaving the parking lot only to return again a short time later. Then a green Dodge truck was observed entering the parking lot and REED was identified as the driver. Reed pulled to one end of the parking lot and walked over to the passenger's side window of **FRENCH'S** vehicle. REED and

**FRENCH** engaged in a short conversation before REED walked over to the vehicle of the cooperating witness. **FRENCH** backed up and pulled alongside the vehicle of the cooperating witness, placing REED between her vehicle and the vehicle of the cooperating witness.

12. As Deputies approached, REED was observed throwing a clear plastic baggie, containing suspected methamphetamines, towards the front of **FRENCH'S** vehicle. **FRENCH** was asked to exit the vehicle for officer safety and in plain sight a small zippered baggie containing suspected ICE was observed on the driver's seat as **FRENCH** exited the vehicle. This bag of methamphetamine was a second baggie in addition to the one REED was observed throwing into the vehicle. Revealed in a search of REED'S body, incident to his arrest was a box of 12 hour Equate pseudoephedrine in his pants pocket. '
13. An inventory of the green Dodge pickup, driven to the location by REED, revealed marijuana, gram zippered baggies, digital scales, and four additional pseudoephedrine pills.
14. On or about September 03, 2010, Deputy J. Arata conducted a traffic stop of a 2009 black Honda Accord for improper backing. The driver of the vehicle was identified as Chelsie Danielle **FRENCH**. Deputy J. Arata advised that **FRENCH** hurriedly exited the vehicle and immediately locked the doors of her vehicle. Deputy J. Arata's requested to search the vehicle due to his knowledge of the area being a known drug area, (i.e., Jerome PARKER and Richard Gaona NUNEZ), and of **FRENCH** being a known drug user and drug distributor. **FRENCH** refused to give officers consent to search the vehicle.
15. Deputy J. Arata contacted Deputy A. O'Shea who in turn contacted Deputy J. Houseknecht and his canine partner Nero. A subsequent positive alert by Nero indicated the present of illegal narcotics in the vehicle. **FRENCH** then advised there was indeed ICE in the vehicle and requested that she be allowed to show Deputies where the drugs could be located. A search of the area located between the driver's seat and the center console revealed a zippered baggie containing several smaller clear with blue stars zippered baggies and one small clear with blue stars zippered baggie with approximately .33 grams of ICE.
16. At the time of the above incident, Chelsie Danielle **FRENCH** was out on bond from her April 20, 2010 arrest for Possession of a Controlled Substance (ICE) and was again arrested for Possession of a Controlled Substance (ICE). This arrest occurred in front of the residence, at the end of the drive way, of **FRENCH'S** current boyfriend Richard Gaona NUNEZ.
17. In February 2011, HSI ASAC Mobile, Alabama received information from the Mobile County Sheriff's Department regarding Chelsie Danielle **FRENCH**, along with her boyfriend Richard Gaona NUNEZ, were distributing "ICE" in the Mobile area.
18. On or about March 15, 2011, HSI Special Agent (S/A) Fermo, Agent Pena and Deputy Busby interviewed Samantha Jo Johnson regarding her involvement in a large scale

methamphetamine smuggling and distribution ring. S/A Fermo informed JOHNSON about a current investigation in which her (JOHNSON'S) name had appeared. S/A Fermo stated to JOHNSON that no promises could be made but if she was willing to help law enforcement her cooperation would be forwarded to the U.S. Attorney for consideration. JOHNSON agreed to assist law enforcement regarding this loosely affiliated drug smuggling and distribution organization.

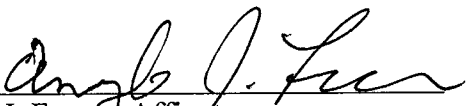
19. S/A Fermo asked JOHNSON about Chelsie **FRENCH**. JOHNSON stated that **FRENCH** and Casey Anne KINARD both use and sell drugs. JOHNSON stated that she purchased about a half a gram of ICE methamphetamine from **FRENCH**. JOHNSON advised that **FRENCH** had an additional eight ball of ICE in her possession at this time. JOHNSON stated she did not know his name but the methamphetamine came from a Mexican guy. S/A Fermo showed JOHNSON a photo chart and JOHNSON identified **FRENCH** and KINARD. JOHNSON agreed to testify to this information if requested by law enforcement. Also on March 15, 2011, HSI Special Agent (S/A) Fermo, Agent Pena and Deputy Busby interviewed Jorge VARGAS in the presence of his lawyer. S/A Pena asked VARGAS to describe what he, VARGAS, knows about Richard NUNEZ. VARGAS stated that NUNEZ sells methamphetamine in the Mobile area and that the drugs he, VARGAS, was arrested with by the Sheriffs department in December 2010 came from NUNEZ. VARGAS stated that NUNEZ drives to Atlanta to pick-up the narcotics from a Mexican drug smuggling organization. S/A Fermo asked VARGAS the source of the drugs and VARGAS stated that he did not know but knows the drugs come from Mexico to Atlanta and then to Mobile, Alabama. VARGAS stated that NUNEZ goes to Atlanta about every 2-3 weeks and picks up a shipment of drugs. VARGAS stated that when NUNEZ goes he takes a load vehicle and has a white female drive for him. NUNEZ then follows behind the vehicle to make sure the drugs arrive back in Mobile, Alabama. VARGAS stated that the female that furnishes the vehicle is Alicia. S/A Fermo asked VARGAS if NUNEZ had a girlfriend. VARGAS stated that NUNEZ'S girlfriend is a girl named **FRENCH** and has a good friend she always runs around with. S/A Fermo showed VARGAS a picture of several people and VARGAS identified Chelsie **FRENCH** as NUNEZ girlfriend and Kasey KINARD as **FRENCH'S** friend. VARGAS stated that both **FRENCH** and KINARD use and sells drugs supplied by NUNEZ.
20. On or about May 11, 2011, Garner Howard CHESTANG was stopped driving a 1997 gold Chevrolet S-10 registered to Richard Gaona NUNEZ. CHESTANG was found to be in possession of a quantity of marijuana and arrested. A search warrant was subsequently executed on Chestang's residence located at 7419 Gaynor Road with additional marijuana being located in the residence of Chestang's.
21. While executing the search warrant, a white Lincoln Navigator, driven by Chelsie Danielle **FRENCH**, was observed pulling into the driveway of 7419 Gaynor Road. **FRENCH**, upon seeing law enforcement, backed out of the driveway and sped away at a high rate of speed. Marked units initiated a traffic stop of **FRENCH'S** vehicle and transported **FRENCH** to meet with S/A Fermo.



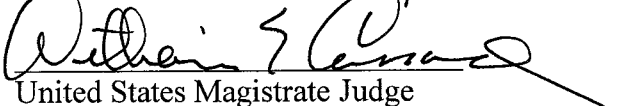
24. At approximately 6:57 pm **FRENCH** asked if she could make a deal with the government. S/A Fermo contacted AUSA May who indicated that **FRENCH** would have to provide significant assistance to the U.S. Government in doing something proactive and not just providing historical information, but that no promises could be made at this time. S/A Fermo and Deputy Legire explained to **FRENCH** what AUSA May had stated and provided **FRENCH** a Miranda Form and asked did she understand the form. S/A Fermo read over the rights section to **FRENCH** advising her of the rights to have an attorney present during questions and that any statements she made could be used against her. **FRENCH** read over the form and signed the form and agreed to cooperate.
25. **FRENCH** stated she understood her rights and agreed to provide all her information on NUNEZ and his methods of operation. S/A Fermo asked **FRENCH** to describe her role with NUNEZ. **FRENCH** stated that he is her boyfriend and she, **FRENCH**, distributes crystal meth for him. S/A Fermo asked **FRENCH** if she knew where the drugs came from. **FRENCH** stated that he meets with other Mexicans and these "Mexicans mainstream from Mexico to Georgia". **FRENCH** stated that she has been to Georgia on (2) two occasions with NUNEZ and on one of the occasions NUNEZ had someone bring the drugs back to Mobile for him. S/A Fermo asked what is the largest amount of methamphetamine she had seen in NUNEZ's possession? **FRENCH** indicated that she has seen 200 grams of "ice". **FRENCH** indicated that he, NUNEZ, slowed down in his distribution since she, **FRENCH**, was arrested in the front yard of NUNEZ'S house in possession of "ice" by the Mobile County Sheriff's Department. This statement was verified by Deputy Busby who advised agents that in September 2010, Deputies responded to a call by a patrol officer involving a traffic stop on **FRENCH'S** vehicle. This incident occurred in the front of NUNEZ'S residence. As officers spoke with **FRENCH** they determined that she was being deceptive and that narcotics maybe present in the car. Deputies ran a K-9 on the vehicle, at which time **FRENCH** informed officers she would show them where the narcotics were stored. Deputies recovered a half a gram of "ice" from **FRENCH'S** vehicle (this incident is detailed in paragraph 14 – 16 above). S/A Fermo asked **FRENCH** to describe all the people that distribute for NUNEZ. **FRENCH** indicated that CHESTANG sells, she sells and Joel LNU by Dairy Queen sells. **FRENCH** stated that she began dealing with NUNEZ around July 2010.
22. On May 17, 2011, an interview was conducted by Deputy Busby and Deputy O'Shea with Attorney Sid Harrell and Allison Brooke CARTEE. The interview was conducted by asking CARTEE about individuals with whom she is/was associated with, those include: Casey KINARD, Chelsie Danielle **FRENCH** and Richard Gaona NUNEZ. Deputy Busby had personal knowledge that CARTEE had allowed Richard G. NUNEZ to use her (Cartee's) vehicle to go to Atlanta, Georgia the summer of 2010. Allison had been stopped in NUNEZ'S Mitsubishi Spider and told Deputy J. Arata that NUNEZ had taken a four wheeler to Atlanta in her truck. In reference to **FRENCH** and Nunez, CARTEE had the following information to include; CARTEE stated that she was supposed to be paid an eight (8) ball of "ICE" (pure methamphetamine) in exchange for allowing NUNEZ the use of her truck in 2010 to travel to Atlanta, Georgia. **FRENCH**

gave Allison 1 ½ to 2 grams of "ICE" prior to NUNEZ'S departure but she (CARTEE) never received the remainder.

23. The first time that CARTEE ever purchased "ICE" from **FRENCH** was when **FRENCH** was living with Daniel Oneal Newburn (Big Geek) behind Leigh Cook's house, across the bay, around the first part of 2010. Brianna STRINGFELLOW drove CARTEE over to **FRENCH'S** in CARTEE'S black Honda. CARTEE purchased about one gram of meth for \$100.00 from **FRENCH**. When asked to give an approximate number of times that CARTEE purchased methamphetamine from **FRENCH**, Cartee responded that a "ball park figure" would be fifty (50) different times at 1-1 ½ grams of methamphetamine each purchase. This was from early 2010 until six to seven months ago (late 2010).
24. Deputy Busby asked CARTEE how **FRENCH** was introduced to NUNEZ. CARTEE stated that STRINGFELLOW introduced **FRENCH** to NUNEZ; STRINGFELLOW had met NUNEZ through Jeff EBARB. CARTEE further stated that STRINGFELLOW and **FRENCH** had a "falling out" because the two had "made a pact" that neither would go over to NUNEZ'S without the other and **FRENCH** broke the pact around May/June 2010. **FRENCH** initially went to NUNEZ and had "ICE" fronted to her, a half (1/2) ounce each time. CARTEE described how **FRENCH** would make fun of NUNEZ because she (**FRENCH**) would only have \$400.00-\$500.00 for the "ICE" and NUNEZ would still sell **FRENCH** the half ounce. NUNEZ'S price for a half ounce of "ICE" was \$800.00. CARTEE indicated that she had personal knowledge of NUNEZ giving **FRENCH** approximately three (3) ounces of "ICE" overall during the time frame of May/June 2010. The most "ICE" (pure methamphetamine) that CARTEE has personally seen **FRENCH** with, at one time, was close to an ounce in/around late 2010. CARTEE stated that on or about Friday (May 12, 2011) Thomas McThaniel TURNER told CARTEE that "**FRENCH** was pretty much running NUNEZ'S operation".
25. From the first time that CARTEE met **FRENCH**, CARTEE estimates to have personally seen **FRENCH** with, purchased from **FRENCH**, or "used" with **FRENCH** approximately one container, the size of a gallon, full of dirty meth. CARTEE was then asked how much "ICE" she had personally seen in **FRENCH'S** possession, purchased from or used with **FRENCH** and Cartee replied "you could fill up three (3) to four (4) gallon size containers."
26. CARTEE told of a time when she and **FRENCH** met up on Brunson Lane (the road where Casey Kinard lives), at **FRENCH's** request. **FRENCH** was on her way either to Mt. Vernon or back to NUNEZ's and asked CARTEE to "hold" a half ounce of "ICE". CARTEE advised that she "took" seven (7) grams out of the half ounce and went to Tillman's corner. However, according to CARTEE, she ended up paying **FRENCH** for the seven grams of "ICE" around September 2010.
27. Based on the preceding facts, I believe that probable cause exists that indicates Chelsie Danielle **FRENCH** violated U.S. Federal Laws 21 USC 841 and 21 USC 846.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Angelo J. Fermo, Affiant  
Special Agent  
Homeland Security Investigations (HSI)

Sworn to and subscribed before me  
This the 21<sup>st</sup> of June, 2011

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
United States Magistrate Judge